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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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DOI In The News

Interior Chief Zinke Spares Another Monument, Recommends No Changes To Upper Missouri River Breaks.

The [Washington Times](#) (8/2, Wolfgang) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "spared another historic site," announcing Wednesday "that he will not recommend any changes to the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument." Zinke said in a statement that "the 378,000-acre monument is no longer a part of his comprehensive review of more than two dozen monuments across the country."

The [New York Times](#) (8/2, Lipton) reports that Zinke said, "The monument is one of the only free-flowing areas of the Missouri that remains as Lewis and Clark saw it more than 200 years ago."

The [AP](#) (8/2, Daly) reports that Montana Gov. Steve Bullock "had asked Zinke to keep the Breaks monument unchanged as he reviews 27 national monuments designated by previous presidents." The Montana monument is "the fourth Zinke has removed from his review ahead of a final report due later this month." Twenty-three other national monuments still "face curtailing or elimination of protections put in place over the past two decades by presidents from both

parties.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [ABC News](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Daily Inter Lake \(MT\)](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (8/2), [Business Insider](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Harrisonburg \(VA\) Daily News Record](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Springfield \(OH\) News Sun](#) (8/2), the [Traverse City \(MI\) Record-Eagle](#) (8/2, Daly), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Daily Mail](#) (8/2), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (8/1, Daly), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (8/2, Daly), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (8/2, Daly), and the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (8/2, Matthew Daly |, Ap).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (8/2, Lutey), [KTVO-TV Billings \(MT\)](#) Billings, MT (8/2, Klemann), and [KPAX-TV Missoula \(MT\)](#) Missoula, MT (8/2, Klemann).

Zinke Meets With Sportsmen As Some Ask ‘What Happened’ To Him.

[E&E Publishing](#) (8/2, Streater, Yachnin) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Wednesday met “with sporting groups in a closed-door meeting in Washington, even as a national sportsmen’s organization launched an ad campaign in Zinke’s home state of Montana questioning his ongoing review of national monuments and his overall commitment to public lands.” Zinke “hosted the private ‘Sportsmen’s Summit’ with dozens of organizations, including the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, the National Rifle Association, Safari Club International and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.” Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift said, “Access to our public lands for hunting and fishing is at the heart of Secretary Zinke’s agenda, which is why on day one he signed an order to look into areas to open up access. Today’s summit brought together more than 30 sportsmen’s organizations and wildlife conservation organizations at the Department to talk about how we can all work together to achieve this mission.”

Montana Sportsmen’s Group Criticizes Secretary Zinke In Ad Campaign. [Montana Public Radio](#) (8/2) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is “now the target of a new ad campaign launched by a Montana-based sportsmen’s group.” They’re concerned that “Zinke’s review of other national monuments could put a damper on hunting and fishing in public lands and water.” Land Tawney, CEO of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, says in an ad, “Make no mistake, Zinke’s national monument review threatens our heritage and thousands of jobs. Mr. Secretary, don’t turn your back on Roosevelt now.” The group is “launching a seven-figure radio, TV and web campaign.”

Legal Scholars Dispute Whether Monuments Are Permanent.

The [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (8/2, Shogren) reports that “the high regard given” national monuments is “part of what makes President Donald Trump’s order to review all large monuments designated since 1996 so extraordinary.” The article notes that “courts have never decided whether a president has the legal authority to change or undo a designated monument, and now this uncertainty has sparked a clash of legal titans.” According to the article, “a multitude of legal experts — including 121 law professors — argue that presidents lack the power to alter or revoke monuments.” However, “a much smaller but no less adamant group asserts the opposite.” As a result, “the ultimate fate of any monuments Trump targets likely will lie with the courts.”

Additional coverage of the review of national monuments was provided by the [Moapa Valley \(NV\) Progress](#) (8/2, Robison), the [Arizona Daily Star](#) (8/2, Davis), the [Vail \(CO\) Daily](#) (8/2, Boyd), the [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (8/2, Davidge), and [Ricochet](#) (8/2, Gabriel).

Fireworks Fizzle After Alleged Threat Over Vote.

The [Alaska Journal of Commerce](#) (8/2, Brehmer) reports that “the seemingly odd mix of health care and resource issues was blended July 26” when Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke called Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan “separately on behalf of President Donald Trump and expressed displeasure” with Murkowski’s vote against the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Alaska Chamber CEO Curtis Thayer “said he also got a call from the nation’s capital July 26, but his call was from a friend there who said if he received a call from an unknown number he should answer it, as it would likely be from Zinke’s office.” Thayer “said he would be surprised if the administration actually tried to exact revenge in any material form on Alaska as a result of Murkowski’s health insurance votes.” He said, “I just don’t see with Secretary Zinke visiting here in May and the comments he made publicly — and the direction of the delegation — I don’t see a harsh penalty. I think there could be a reminder that we need to work together; you have things we need and

we have things you need, but I just don't see it being a long-term penalty — penalizing the state."

Murkowski Earns Respect; ANWR Needs Protection. In an op-ed for the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (8/2, Demientieff), Bernadette Demientieff, executive director of the Gwich' in Steering Committee, lauds Murkowski "for her stand to protect the interest of the people's health in this country" and expresses disappointment "by President Trump's and Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke's response." Demientieff claims that "this administration's response to Murkowski is a clear indication that they do not care about my land or my people." She asserts that "the total lack of concern Trump and Zinke have shown during this incident must provide further incentive for Congress to take drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge off the table."

Additional Coverage: Officials Applaud Mine Proposal To Create Jobs In West Virginia, Virginia.

Additional coverage that Secretary Ryan Zinke "this week applauded the initial construction of the Berwind Mine located on the border of West Virginia and Virginia" was provided by the [Williamson \(WV\) Daily News](#) (8/3).

Additional Coverage: Interior Official Turns Whistleblower, Claiming Retaliation For Climate Change Work.

Additional coverage of the reassignment of Interior official Joel Clement was provided by [PBS NewsHour](#) (8/2).

'Go West, Mr. President, Go West'.

In an op-ed for the [Washington Times](#) (8/2, Hunt), Jeff Hunt, the Chairman of the Western Conservative Summit, Director of the Centennial Institute, and Vice President of Public Policy for Colorado Christian University, writes that "Western conservatives are fighting hard to advance conservative principles and public policy in their states." He says that "Ryan Zinke, a Western conservative himself, was a great selection as U.S. secretary of the Interior." In particular, Hunt welcomes Zinke's actions on energy development and the review of national monuments. Hunt looks forward to "a visit from the president to the Western United States," which "would strengthen grass-roots conservatives and help the president's agenda."

Zinke, Interior Botched Zuckerberg's Visit.

In an editorial, the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (8/3) criticizes the Trump Administration and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke for blocking "Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg from meeting with Glacier National Park's superintendent and a prominent federal climate scientist." The paper says that "if the intent behind this juvenile move was to distract attention from climate change, it had precisely the opposite effect, drawing more attention to the issue than it would have garnered had the meeting gone on as scheduled." In conclusion, the paper seriously hopes that the Trump Administration will rethink its position on climate change and that Zinke "and his staff can find more important things to do with their time than deciding who goes along on celebrity tours."

Lead Bullets Poison Wildlife, Our Families.

In a piece for the [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (8/2, Hatch), Cory Hatch writes that "in March one of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's first official acts was to reverse an Obama-era rule that would have phased out lead bullets on public lands." Hatch questions why we would allow "children to eat meat tainted with lead bullet fragments?" According to Hatch, "Zinke enacted a reversal that, while popular with his constituents, only harms the American public and wildlife."

Bureau Of Indian Affairs

10th Circ. Won't Halt Tribal Gambling Procedures Ruling.

[Law360](#) (8/2, Powell) reports that "the Tenth Circuit refused Wednesday to halt the effect of its ruling that the head of the U.S. Department of the Interior lacks the authority to approve procedures allowing the Pueblo of Pojoaque to continue its casino operations in New Mexico in the absence of a state gambling compact."

Bureau Of Indian Education

Judge Dismisses Most Of Title IX Lawsuit Against Haskell.

The [AP](#) (8/2) reports that “a federal judge has dismissed most of a Title IX lawsuit filed against Haskell Indian Nations University by a former student who says she was treated unfairly and ultimately expelled after she reported she was raped in a dormitory three years ago by two football players.” In his decision, U.S. District Judge J. Thomas Marten sided “with attorneys for the university who argued that Title IX doesn’t apply to Haskell as it does to other public colleges because the school is a federal agency operated by the Bureau of Indian Education.” Marten allowed “the woman’s request to allow a Privacy Act claim to proceed in court.” However, he held “that the woman, who has been named Jane Doe H. in court filings, would have to use her name to proceed with that claim.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Lawrence \(KS\) Journal World](#) (8/2, Shepherd).

Native American Youth And Education On The Reservation.

[The Atlantic](#) (8/2, Wong) reports on the challenges facing students on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Increasingly, some students “see educational attainment as key to reclaiming Native identity and culture.” Jacob Rosales, who will study at Yale University, said, “We are part of the Seventh Generation ... prophesied to be the generation that creates those individuals that will spearhead the economic, spiritual, and social renewal.”

Bureau Of Land Management

Dinosaur Fossil Found On Future Site Of Mountain Bike Route.

The [AP](#) (8/2) reports that “Colorado government officials say they found a dinosaur fossil while they were conducting early surveys for a bike trail.” According to the article, “experts believe the large lower leg bone belonged to a duck-billed dinosaur named hadrosaur that roamed in the Grand Junction area 70 million years ago.” The fossil was “removed from “the future site of the 30-mile (48-kilometer) Palisade Plunge mountain biking route” by “a Bureau of Land Management team, a local paleontologist and a sedimentologist last week.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KUSA-TV Denver \(CO\)](#) Denver (8/2, Moraitis).

Officials Investigating Illegal Wild Horse Hazing Report.

The [AP](#) (8/2) reports that the Bureau of Land Management and the Emery County Sheriff’s Office have “launched an investigation after a photographer reported seeing members of the sheriff’s search and rescue team harassing wild mustangs.” According to the article, “the photographer captured images of men on ATV and bikes chasing horses July 9.” BLM spokeswoman Lisa Reid “says the photographer handed over the photos and a video to the BLM, which has begun an investigation.”

Ongoing Resistance To Wayne National Forest Fracking As September Land Auction Looms.

[Cleveland Scene Magazine](#) (8/2, Sandy) reports the Bureau of Land Management will “sell rights to 141 acres” in Wayne National Forest Sept. 21 According to the article, “with the September auction looming, The Center for Biological Diversity, Heartwood, Ohio Environmental Council, Sierra Club, The Buckeye Environmental Network and Athens County Fracking Action Network have jointly filed a protest against the event.” The groups say “that the cumulative effect of Wayne National Forest drilling and the Rover pipeline construction was not considered in the BLM’s environmental assessment.”

Nolan, Emmers Want To Shortcircuit Mining Review.

In an op-ed for the [Rochester \(MN\) Post-Bulletin](#) (8/2, Zabokrtsky), Jason Zabokrtsky, founder and head guide for Ely Outfitting Co., and co-chairman of Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters, writes that Minnesotans “have a responsibility to protect” the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness “so future generations can enjoy the Boundary Waters in the same ways we have.” However, Zabokrtsky is dismayed that “the health and integrity of our priceless Boundary Waters appear to be of no concern to Minnesota Congressmen Rick Nolan and Tom Emmer.” He claims that “Nolan and Emmer are doing everything they can to roll back protections and give this most iconic of Minnesota’s publicly-owned northwoods lands to Chilean mining giant Antofagasta.” According to Zabokrtsky, “Nolan’s and Emmer’s efforts to halt an environmental review that would support a science-based determination constitute a blow at the heart of Minnesota.” He

argues that “not only would such a move create irreparable harm to the Boundary Waters and Superior National Forest, it would also endanger the \$913 million in annual consumer spending that the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs National Park generate.”

Progress On Increasing Access To Federal Lands.

[Breaking Energy](#) (8/2, Green) says that “it’s a positive step – for U.S. energy, economic growth, consumer benefits and climate progress – for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to begin rescinding its 2015 hydraulic fracturing rule.” The piece says the rule “duplicates existing and effective state regulation and risks delaying energy development, potentially impacting consumers.” The Interior Department’s Katharine S. McGregor explained: “Maintaining positive, productive working relationships with our state and tribal partners is a top priority of this Administration. We are committed to working collaboratively with them to ensure the safe and environmentally responsible development of our Nation’s energy resources. Our proposal to rescind the 2015 final rule responds to the President’s call to reduce regulatory burdens, foster job growth, and serve the energy needs of America’s families, small businesses, and manufacturers.”

Editorial: A Needed Second Exit For Crooked River Ranch.

In an editorial, the [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (8/2) praises a plan “to add a second paved exit” from Crooked River Ranch, “doubling the routes out that can be used in case of a wildfire or other emergency.” The action, “announced July 20, comes as the result of work by Prineville District BLM officials, Deschutes County and Crooked River Ranch residents.” As a result, “a 1-mile paved road will run southwest across BLM land from NW Quail Road to join Lower Bridge Road west of Terrebonne.”

Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

Hearings Ahead On Oil, Gas Leasing Program.

The [Carteret County \(NC\) News-Times](#) (8/2) reports that North Carolina environmental officials will “conduct three public hearings to gather comments on the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s request for information and comments on the preparation of the 2019-24 national outer continental shelf oil and gas leasing program.” The BOEM is “seeking information and requesting comments on the preparation of a new five-year national outer continental shelf program for 2019-24, in accordance with the federal Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act.” The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality is “seeking public input and information on the potential impact of oil and gas exploration and development on the biological, social, economic and aesthetic values of North Carolina’s coast.”

Supporters, Detractors Spar Over Seismic Testing For Oil.

The [Brunswick \(GA\) News](#) (8/3, Wolfe) reports that “as the months move closer to a possible opening of the Atlantic Coast to underwater seismic airgun exploration, opponents of the practice and industry advocates continue to push and pull in the debate that could — once exploration commences — lead to offshore oil and gas drilling.” Dustin Cranor, senior communications director of the ocean conservation and advocacy group Oceana, “said the damaging effects of seismic testing for oil to marine life are well-documented and significant.” However, “proponents of seismic testing and the drilling that would follow — notably, the industries engaged in that practice — strongly disagree with what are seen as overblown concerns that hinder otherwise responsible energy practices.”

Fish And Wildlife Service

Environmental Groups Join The Legal Fray On Golden-cheeked Warbler.

The [San Antonio Express-News](#) (8/2, Gibbons) reports that “four environmental groups, two of them based in Texas, are asking to join the fight to keep the golden-cheeked warbler on the endangered species list.” The [Houston Chronicle](#) (8/2, Gibbons) reports that “Travis Audubon, the Texas Ornithological Society, the Center for Biological Diversity and Defenders of Wildlife filed a motion Tuesday asking a judge to let them intervene in a lawsuit by the Texas General Land Office to take the bird off the list.” According to the article, “the warbler case could test whether

Trump's Department of Justice and Department of the Interior will vigorously defend protections for endangered species."

Nearly 2 Tons Of Seized Ivory To Be Crushed In Central Park.

The [AP](#) (8/2, Esch) reports that "nearly two tons of trinkets, statues and jewelry crafted from the tusks of at least 100 slaughtered elephants are heading for a rock crusher in New York City's Central Park to demonstrate the state's commitment to smashing the illegal ivory trade." State environmental officials, "who are partnering with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Tiffany & Co. for Thursday's 'Ivory Crush,' say no price justifies slaughtering elephants for their tusks."

Review Of Nuclear Weapons Plant Says Protections Are Working.

The [AP](#) (8/2) reports that "the latest government review of a former nuclear weapons plant outside Denver says precautions put in place after a 10-year cleanup are protecting people and the environment." The U.S. Department of Energy "released the review Wednesday on the most contaminated portion of the Rocky Flats site west of Denver." According to the article, "the review covered the central part of the property where manufacturing took place."

Additional Coverage: Appeals Court Upholds Endangered Species Protection For Great Lakes Gray Wolves.

Additional coverage that "the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals on Tuesday affirmed a 2014 lower-court ruling that restored Endangered Species Act protection for gray wolves in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin" was provided by [USA Today](#) (8/2, Matheny), the [Christian Science Monitor](#) (8/2, Flesher), the [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (8/2, Koshmrl), the [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (8/2, Landers), the [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (8/3, D'Angelo), and [The Scientist](#) (8/2, Offord).

Memo To The West: When You Hunt Grizzlies And Wolves, You Lose Midwest Tourists.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (8/2) editorializes that there are reasons to wary after the delisting of Yellowstone grizzlies. It notes that "a decade ago a similar lifting of protections backfired," the bears "hugely contribute to the Mountain West's economy," and "the feds' action doesn't ease the geographic and genetic isolation of this population." It hopes the superintendent of Yellowstone and several Native American tribes, who opposed the delisting, will "watch and publicize how the bears do under the new policy." It also hopes "federal and state agencies that often give too much deference to hunters and ranchers haven't repeated their bungling of a decade ago."

Editorial: New Wolf Recovery Plan Needs To Focus On Science.

The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (8/3) editorializes that "the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's long-awaited revision of its Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan – currently a draft but due in its final form by Nov. 30 – isn't being fully embraced by environmental groups or cattle ranchers, which could indicate it's a fair compromise." However, "the plan, which hadn't been updated since 1982, contains some serious flaws that appear to place political expediency ahead of science." The paper says that "those shortcomings need to be addressed in the final document, as it will be the de facto road map for saving the Mexico gray wolf from extinction and ensuring a healthy ecosystem in southwestern New Mexico and Arizona."

National Park Service

National Park Service Grants Money To Preserve Bear River Massacre Site.

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (8/2, Carlisle) reports that the National Park Service is "granting a Native American tribe \$72,000 to help preserve the site of the 1863 Bear River Massacre." The recipient, the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, has "worked for years to memorialize the massacre. Up to 500 members of the tribe died during the attack by the U.S. Army." The grant was "announced as part of a nationwide effort by the Park Service to preserve battlefields."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Preston \(ID\) Citizen](#) (8/2, SEAMONS).

NPS Grants Hawaii Nearly \$80K To Preserve Historic Battlefield. [KGMB-TV](#) Honolulu (8/2, Donahue) reports that the National Park Service has "awarded the University of Hawaii nearly \$80,000 to help preserve the site of the Battle of Nuuanu." The grant was awarded through the American Battlefield Program, "which is providing \$1.2 million dollars to local communities across the country to preserve and protect historic battlefields." National Park Service Director Michael T.

Reynolds said, "We are excited to partner with public and private organizations committed to protecting and preserving our country's historic national treasures. Through these grants, and the work the grantees are accomplishing, we are ensuring that these hallowed sites are protected and maintained for future generations."

Local Research Center Awarded National Grant. The [Citrus County \(FL\) Chronicle](#) (8/2) reports that the National Park Service awarded the Gulf Archaeology Research Institute "\$72,500 for a study Second Seminole War Battle of Wahoo Swamp." Also, the Florida Museum of Natural History "received \$20,000 to research the English campaign against Spanish Florida that culminated the siege of the Castillo de San Marcos at St. Augustine"

Maine Historic Preservation Commission Receives National Park Service Grant.

The [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (8/2) reports that the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has "announced that it has received a partial grant award of \$443,811 from the National Park Service for the 2017 federal fiscal year." The award was "made contingent upon raising a non-federal match of \$349,437.38."

Seniors Snap Up US National Park Passes Before Price Hike.

The [AP](#) (8/2, Ridler) reports that "seniors are snapping up so many lifetime passes good for U.S. national parks and other recreation areas ahead of a steep price increase later this month that some government agencies have run out and started issuing vouchers." The America the Beautiful Lifetime Senior Pass has "been available to buyers 62 and older for \$10 for the past two decades." On Aug. 28, the price is increasing "700 percent, to \$80, after a measure passed by Congress late last year."

10-year-old Offers To Mow White House Lawn.

[CNN International](#) (8/2, Landers) reports that "a 10-year-old boy named Frank" from Falls Church, Virginia has written to President Trump "to offer his lawn mowing services." White House press secretary Sarah Sanders "read the letter from the White House briefing podium on Wednesday." Sanders "said she spoke with the President and not only did he want to pass along the message to Frank that he's 'doing a great job,' but he also wanted to invite Frank to the White House to cut the grass in the famous Rose Garden."

Ellis Island Exhibit 'Streets Paved With Gold' To Feature New Yorkers' Handwritten Stories.

[AM New York](#) (8/2, Cook) reports that the National Park Service "wants to pave Ellis Island with gold, and it needs the help of immigrants to do it." The NPS is looking to collect "anecdotes, advice and messages from New Yorkers who are connected in some way with the immigration process." The NPS, "which manages Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, will take those messages to feature in a new exhibit, 'Streets Paved with Gold.'"

Glacier Park Announces New Procedures For Motorized Boats On Lake McDonald.

The [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (8/2) reports that Glacier National Park officials "announced Wednesday they will begin scheduling motorized watercraft inspections and sealing procedures for boaters who wish to launch on Lake McDonald after a 30-day quarantine period." According to the article, "the quarantine process is designed to prevent invasive zebra and quagga mussels and other invasive species from entering park waters on motorboats." The park has already started "allowing private landowners living within the park boundary around Lake McDonald, whose motorboats are exclusively launched there, to begin accessing the lake." According to Superintendent Jeff Mow, "those boats have exceeded the 30-day quarantine requirement and undergone boat inspections."

NPS Re-establishes Partnership With Oconaluftee Job Corps Center.

The [Waynesville \(NC\) Smoky Mountain News](#) (8/2) reports that "for the first time in 10 years, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is operating a career development center aimed at helping youth develop the skills they'll need to enter the workforce." The Oconaluftee Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center "closed in March 2007, at which point the National Park Service operated it, due to health and safety issues related to mold in the dining hall." According to the article, "the students were immediately transferred to other Job Corps Centers to complete their education and vocational training, with the U.S. Forest Service taking over operations in July 2008." Now, the NPS is "once more a partner in the endeavor after signing an agreement with the Forest Service in July." Park Superintendent Cassius Cash said, "We are fortunate to have the

Oconaluftee Job Corps Center in our backyard. This partnership will allow hard-working youth an opportunity to acquire important trade skills as they work alongside park staff. These skills can help them transition into the workforce of tomorrow."

Tips Sought In Smokies Hit-And-Run Crash That Injured Teenage Girl.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (8/2) reports that "investigators are asking for the public's help in the search for a motorcyclist who fled from the scene of a crash that seriously injured a 13-year-old girl in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park over the weekend." The National Park Service Investigative Services Branch is "seeking information from anyone who may have witnessed the collision or who may have seen the two motorcycles traveling from Gatlinburg toward Townsend on Little River Road, between 7:45 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Saturday."

Additional coverage was provided by [WBIR-TV](#) Knoxville, TN (8/2).

Acadia Reopens Cliffs, Trails After Closures To Help Falcons.

The [AP](#) (8/3) reports that the National Park Service "says it is reopening three cliffs and their associated trails to public entry soon following a closure to protect peregrine falcons." The NPS "closed the areas in March to protect the falcons from disturbances while they were nesting." The agency "says the protection resulted in the fledging of five chicks this year compared to 11 last year." The areas will reopen to the public on Thursday.

Comments Being Solicited On Proposals For Theodore Roosevelt Island.

[Inside NoVa \(VA\)](#) (8/2) reports that the National Park Service is "accepting comments through Sept. 8 related to the scope of projected improvements at Theodore Roosevelt Island." The NPS is "considering alterations to trails, viewpoints and landings for non-motorized watercraft, and must conduct the outreach as part of the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act."

This Park Ranger Has Been Selected As One Of The Nation's Best.

The [Sierra Star \(CA\)](#) (8/2) reports that Geoff Walker from Mount Rainier National Park has "been named the recipient of the annual Harry Yount National Park Ranger Award, one of the National Park Service's most prestigious honors." Walker received the award "at an Aug. 1 ceremony in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the National Park Foundation, the official charitable partner of the National Park Service." Acting National Park Service Director Michael T. Reynolds said, "Geoff exemplifies all of the personal and professional characteristics desired in a park ranger. His positive attitude, calm demeanor, exceptional skills, and desire to serve others shine through everything he does."

Office Of Insular Affairs

Interior Releases \$3M For Compact-Impact.

[Marianas Variety](#) (8/3) reports that Interior Acting Assistant Secretary Nikolao Pula "made available discretionary Compact impact funding in the amount of \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 2017, as an additional federal contribution toward defraying the costs that Guam, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa bear due to the presence of migrants from the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau." Pula said, "The governors of the affected jurisdictions have reported that the federal government is not providing sufficient funds to cover the costs they bear for the impact of migrants from the freely associated states on social services. Both Guam and Hawaii have each reported costs exceeding \$100 million a year."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Big Island \(HI\) Now](#) (8/2), the [Hawaii Free Press](#) (8/2), the [Honolulu Civil Beat \(HI\)](#) (8/1, Blair), the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/2, Borja), and [KGMB-TV](#) Honolulu (8/2, Mumphrey).

Plaskett Touts Cooperation Amid 'Crazy' Washington Scene.

The [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (8/3, O'CONNOR) reports that V.I. Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett "says she's working to keep things moving," despite the "gridlock" in Washington. At a press conference on St. Croix on Wednesday, Plaskett said that "the Washington arms race has had some effect on territorial interests." For instance, the article notes that "the nomination of Douglas Domenech to head the Interior Department's Office of Insular Affairs, which coordinates

policy among U.S. territories and the federal government, has stalled."

Also, the [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (8/3, O'CONNOR) reports that Plaskett said "that the 2018 federal budget looks mixed for the territory." The article notes that "among the upsides" are "a 10 percent increase in funding for capital improvement grants through the Interior Department's Office of Insular Affairs and proposed increases to the Homeland Security Department and the Federal Emergency Management Agency." However, Plaskett said, "There are quite a bit of negatives in this budget."

Court Rejects Marshall Islands' Suit Against US Over Nuclear Treaty.

The [Honolulu Civil Beat \(HI\)](#) (7/31, Blair) reports that "the dismissal of a lawsuit that sought to force the United States to comply with an international treaty on nuclear nonproliferation was upheld Monday by a federal court in San Francisco." The U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals "upheld a lower court's 2015 dismissal of a legal challenge from a group called Nuclear Zero, brought by the Republic of the Marshall Islands." The lawsuit "did not seek money, but asked that the U.S. be found in breach of treaty obligations under international law and the 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons."

Shunned From Bond Market, U.S. Virgin Islands Faces Cash Crisis.

[Reuters](#) (8/2, Respaut) reports that "for years the U.S. Virgin Islands funded essential public services with help from Wall Street," but "now the borrowing window has slammed shut." According to the article, "trouble in neighboring Puerto Rico, which recently filed for a form of bankruptcy after a string of debt defaults, has investors worried that the U.S. Virgin Islands might be next." The USVI has the "biggest per capita debt load of any U.S. territory or state," with \$2 billion owed "to bondholders and creditors" and "billions more in unfunded pension and healthcare obligations."

U.S. Test-Launches ICBM As Tensions Rise With North Korea.

[WMGT-TV](#) Macon, GA (8/2) reports that "the U.S. military successfully test-launched an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile from California early Wednesday, according to an Air Force spokesman — just days after North Korea's second test of an ICBM." According to the article, "the unarmed Minuteman III missile was launched at 2:10 a.m. PT from Vandenberg Air Force Base, about 130 miles northwest of Los Angeles." An Air Force statement "said that the test was not a response to recent North Korean actions but show that the America's nuclear enterprise is 'safe, secure, effective and ready to be able to deter, detect and defend against attacks on the United States and its allies.'" The ICBM was "equipped with a test reentry vehicle, which officials said showed it traveled about 4,200 miles to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands."

Office Of Surface Mining

Coal Mine Reclamation Project Will Clean Up Cook's Run.

The [Lock Haven \(PA\) Express](#) (8/2) reports that "on behalf of Governor Tom Wolf, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Tuesday announced the launch of a coal mine reclamation project in Sproul State Forest to help restore 40 acres and Cooks Run Watershed, a designated High-Quality Coldwater Fishery that was home to native brook trout before acid mine drainage (AMD) impaired it." The Cooks Run Restoration Project is "part of the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Pilot Program, funded by \$30 million from the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement."

US Geological Survey

Scientists On Case Of Deadly Bat Disease Discover New Clues.

[Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) (8/1, Burns) reports that "a new study from the U.S. Geological Survey finds that the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome in bats can be spread much more readily than previously thought." The research "suggests people and equipment can become contaminated with the fungus no matter what time of year they enter caves." Lead author Anne Ballmann, a wildlife disease specialists with the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, said, "It's not just within the winter season when white nose is much more prevalent in the bat populations. But it needs to be considered at all times of year because there's always going to be that

potential to pick it up and move it."

Rapid Rise Of Coastal 'Ghost Forests' Provides Startling Glimpse Of Future.

[NJ News](#) (8/2) reports on "ghost forests," which are "dead trees along vast swaths of coastline invaded by rising seas, something scientists call one of the most visible markers of climate change." According to the article, "the process has occurred naturally for thousands of years, but it has accelerated in recent decades as polar ice melts and raises sea levels, scientists say, pushing salt water farther inland and killing trees in what used to be thriving freshwater plains." The article says that "efforts are underway worldwide to determine exactly how quickly the creation of ghost forests is increasing." However, "scientists agree the startling sight of dead trees in once-healthy areas is an easy-to-grasp example of the consequences of climate change." Greg Noe, a research ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, said, "There is a lot of change going on. It's dramatic and it's changing faster than it has before in human history."

Total Solar Eclipse: How Everyone In America Can See It.

[TIME](#) (7/31, Wilson, Rebala) reports that a total solar eclipse "will traverse the U.S. on Aug. 21." The authors "ran a few calculations to see whether there is enough open space within the umbra for every American to theoretically witness the complete eclipse." Among the maps they used was a National Map published by the United States Geological Survey "that provides detailed data on all federal land." They found that 876 square feet were available per person.

When Life On Earth Was Nearly Extinguished.

In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (7/29, Brannen), Peter Brannen writes that "a growing body of evidence suggests" that the "Great Dying" at the end of the Permian period was "brought on, in large part, by gigantic emissions of carbon dioxide from volcanoes that erupted across a vast swath of Siberia." Seth Burgess, a geologist with the United States Geological Survey, is quoted saying, "The End-Permian mass extinction is unique in earth history. Nothing else is as severe, and it's not even close." This month, the journal *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology* "published a special issue that explores a growing body of evidence that past volcanic releases of carbon dioxide may have helped drive many of the most extreme die-offs in earth history." Brannen writes that "though the Great Dying was truly extreme, and likely included some stresses beyond the scope of humanity's armamentarium, we have emerged as a formidable geological force in our own right as we continue to tweak and warp the complex earth systems that sustain life."

How To Film A Polar Bear.

In a piece for the [Scientific American](#) (8/1, Groskin), video producer Luke Groskin writes the "challenging logistics of polar bear research." He describes filming United States Geological Survey scientist Karyn Rode and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Michelle St. Martin "working over an anesthetized polar bear" to "place an ear tag." According to Groskin, the research will help to understand "how rapid changes to the sea ice...affect the bears of the Chukchi"

Top National News

Trump Unveils Legal Immigration Plan Prioritizing English Speakers, Skilled Workers.

To mostly unfavorable media coverage – including reports on all three major network newscasts – the President yesterday unveiled the Reforming American Immigration for Strong Employment (RAISE) Act. Under the proposal, [Bloomberg News](#) (8/2, Sink) reports, visa applications would be evaluated "based on merit, with a preference for people with higher education or job skills." The White House, notes the [Washington Times](#) (8/2, Boyer, Dinan), said the new system "would be similar to the merit-based immigration systems used by Canada and Australia." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/2, story 2, 2:20, Bruce) said the plan would also "slash legal immigration in half" and limit "admissions based on family connections" – something which, according to [McClatchy](#) (8/2, Ordoñez), would "slash a key tenet of the American policy that helps keep families together." In a "Fact Check" analysis, meanwhile, the [AP](#) (8/2, Boak, Galvan) says the plan "is based on some shaky assumptions, such as the idea that low-wage green-card holders are flooding in to take jobs from Americans."

At any rate, media analysts are giving the plan little chance of becoming law. [NBC Nightly](#)

[News](#) (8/2, story 3, 2:00, Alexander), meanwhile, noted that the President “insists the proposal, if passed, would be the most significant change to the nation’s immigration system in half a century,” but “saying it and doing it are two very different things for a president still waiting for his first legislative victory.” Jeff Zeleny said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (8/2), “I think first and foremost, the White House is trying to appeal to their base” because “they’ve had a series of defeats here.” [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/2, story 2, 2:20, Bruce) said last night “this bill doesn’t seem to be going anywhere,” as “it lacks support even from Republicans.”

Announcing the plan at the White House, [USA Today](#) (8/2, Jackson, Gomez) reports, Trump hosted GOP Sens. Tom Cotton and David Perdue, who authored similar legislation months ago that “has been stalled in the Senate.” There, says [McClatchy](#) (8/2, Ordoñez), “the proposal will have to get 60 votes to cut off debate – a dim prospect.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/2, Bennett) uses identical language to assess the bill’s chances, while [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (8/2) gives it “long odds,” the [AP](#) (8/2, Thomas, Colvin) says it has “little traction,” and [Bloomberg News](#) (8/2, Sink) that it “faces a steep climb.” Mark Krikorian, writing for [National Review](#) (8/2, Krikorian), offers a glimmer of hope, “If the supporters of the DREAM Act are scared enough, they might be willing to deal. A package that includes DREAM, RAISE, and enforcement measures to prevent future DREAMer populations from forming, might actually have a chance. I wouldn’t bet my house on it, but it’s not crazy.”

[Reuters](#) (8/2, Rascoe, Rosenberg) indicates Trump’s push follows “a crackdown on illegal immigration that has sharply reduced the number of unauthorized border crossings from Mexico.” The [Washington Post](#) (8/2, Nakamura) reports “the outlines of the legislation” unveiled yesterday “reflect the aims Trump touted on the campaign trail,” calling “for drastic cuts to family-based immigration programs that allow siblings and grown children of US citizens and legal residents to apply for green cards. (Minor children and spouses would still be able to apply.)” It also establishes “a point system based on factors such as English ability, education levels and job skills would be created to rank applicants for the 140,000 employment-based green cards distributed annually.” Moreover, the proposal would “cap refugee levels at 50,000 per year and to end a visa diversity lottery that has awarded 50,000 green cards a year.”

Writing for [National Review](#) (8/2, VerBruggen), Robert VerBruggen called the “point system...a thing of beauty. Immigrants would be scored on a scale of zero to 100, though in practice it’s more like a scale of zero to 45 — someone with a perfect score would need a Nobel Prize (25 points), an Olympic medal (15), and \$1.8 million invested in a business (12), for instance.” VerBruggen adds that “those without at least 30 points would be ineligible.”

[USA Today](#) (8/2, Jackson, Gomez) notes the President “said the current system ‘has not been fair’ to US workers because it allows employers to undercut them by hiring migrants for less pay,” and [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/2, story 3, 2:00, Alexander) showed him saying, “This competitive application process will favor applicants who can speak English, financially support themselves and their families, and demonstrate skills that will contribute to our economy.” The [New York Times](#) (8/2, Baker) reports the President also said, “This legislation...will not only restore our competitive edge in the 21st century, but it will restore the sacred bonds of trust between America and its citizens. This legislation demonstrates our compassion for struggling American families who deserve an immigration system that puts their needs first and that puts America first.” [Townhall](#) (8/2, Pavlich), meanwhile, quoted Trump as saying, “The green card reforms in the RAISE Act will give American workers a pay raise by reducing unskilled immigration.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/2, Mann, Meckler) runs a similar report including the same Trump statements.

Perdue said on [Fox News Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (8/2), “People out there in the rest of the country get this. Seventy-two percent believe it should be the primary worker plus their nuclear family or less. Eighteen percent believe it ought to be just the worker. So people out there in the real world get this. It’s pro-worker. It’s pro-growth. And it’s been proven to work in Canada and Australia.”

Cotton told [Fox News Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (8/2), “The law of supply and demand applies to the labor market just like does every other market, even though some Republicans feel like it doesn’t apply there. Look, over the last 40 years, my lifetime, you’ve seen quadrupling of the number of foreign born residents in our country. The vast majority of those – 14 out of 15 – today come here not based on their skills or their education or their English language ability. ... They are, by definition, unskilled and low-skilled. In that 40-year window, if you have a high school degree or less, your wages have fallen. If you have more than that, so if you are not competing with those very same immigrants, your wages have increased. So there is a direct correlation between the mass unskilled, low-skilled migration we have seen over the last few

decades and stagnant wages and standards of living for working Americans.”

[Reuters](#) (8/2, Rascoe, Rosenberg) reports Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina “said his state is dependent on immigrant labor to sustain the two biggest sectors of the economy: agriculture and tourism.” [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (8/2) reported Graham seemed to speak “for a lot of Republicans.”

Asked on [CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360](#) (8/2) if this policy “expands the tent,” Sen. Jeff Flake said, “No. I do believe that we can do a merit-based system somewhat. SB-744, the last bipartisan immigration bill that I was a part of, we moved on legal immigration partly to a merit-based system. There was still a family-based side, but there was a merit-based system. We didn’t cut the number of immigrants in half. I don’t think that we should do that. I think we need to look out for the needs of our economy and I don’t think the economy will be well served by cutting the number of immigrants in half.”

Rep. Will Hurd said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (8/2), “When we look at trying to fix our broken immigration system, we should be looking at trying to turn it into a market-based system. ... I think this proposal that was introduced today doesn’t have a chance of going anywhere, especially in the Senate. If you can’t have a bipartisan piece of legislation on immigration, it’s not going to go anywhere in the Senate. So, this is, I think, something that has no place to go.”

[Breitbart](#) (8/2, Munro), meanwhile, reports “Democrats and their ethnic pressure groups are expected to oppose the immigration reform because they wish to increase the inflow of unskilled foreign migrants,” while “business groups also oppose the measure because it would raise wages and reduce the inflow of new welfare-aided consumers.” Senior economics reporter Steve Liesman said on [CNBC’s Closing Bell](#) (8/2), “Economists in general don’t give high marks to this bill endorsed by the President. ... Economists are most concerned about the decline in immigration. That would reduce the labor force growth and overall economic growth.” Liesman added that “a positive to the new point system” is that it “could be an increase in the skills of immigrants. That would be a positive for productivity and a positive for growth. But several economists say the economic impact of a half a million fewer immigrants which is called for in the bill would overwhelm those benefits.”

[Wired](#) (8/2, Lapowsky) reported that “in his remarks...Trump framed the RAISE Act as a bid to protect American workers and create good-paying jobs in America.” However, “40 percent of Fortune 500 businesses were started by immigrants and their children, ‘many of whom did not speak English or came here as refugees,’ says AOL cofounder Steve Case.”

Jeremy Robbins, the executive director of New American Economy, writes in the [Washington Post](#) (8/2) that “drastic cuts to legal immigration levels would hurt economic growth and result in fewer jobs for Americans,” stripping “the United States of our greatest competitive advantage in the global economy: that we attract so many talented, innovative entrepreneurs and individuals from so many different places.”

Sen. Dick Durbin said on [CNN’s The Lead](#) (8/2), “A lot of the jobs filled by immigrants are jobs Americans don’t care to fill.” Durbin added that “you find a lot of immigrants taking these dirty, hot, sweaty jobs and there aren’t a lot of Americans standing in line trying to get that opportunity. So, I think they’re overlooking the obvious. There are some jobs immigrants will take that, quite frankly, Americans won’t take.”

Sen. Dianne Feinstein said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (8/2), “It doesn’t make sense to me what [Trump is] doing.” She continued that Trump is “cutting refugees with all the millions of people without homes, with all the terrible things that are happening,” and “to add insult to injury, he takes the scandal-ridden EB-5 program, which I gather the Trump family uses, and which both the chairman of my committee and myself believe should be abolished, and he continues it.” She said she doesn’t think the legislation passes the Senate, and she “will do everything I can to prevent it from passing.”

CNN’s Acosta, Miller Clash Over Plan At White House Briefing. Following the announcement, CNN reporter Jim Acosta expressed outrage over the proposal at a White House press briefing, and engaged in a heated [exchange](#) with Trump aide Stephen Miller that was widely featured across the coverage. [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (8/2), for example, dedicated more than 14 minutes to the story, and the [CBS Evening News](#) (8/2, story 3, 1:30, Mason) devoted all but the very first sentence of its report on the immigration plan to the exchanges.

Miller’s handling of the clash, meanwhile, was relished in conservative media outlets. For instance, the [Daily Caller](#) (8/2, Pfeiffer) ran two pieces on it, once headlined “Miller Demolishes Journalists At Briefing” and [another one](#) (8/2, Hasson) titled “Stephen Miller Embarrasses Jim Acosta.” The [Washington Examiner](#) (8/2, Quinn), under the headline “Conservatives Praise Stephen Miller, Rebuke CNN’s Acosta After White House Press Briefing,” notes Ann Coulter’s

praise for Miller's performance, and [The Federalist](#) (8/2) says Acosta "threw a fit in the briefing room."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (8/2, story 3, 2:00, Alexander) showed Acosta accusing the Administration of "trying to engineer the racial and ethnic flow of people into the country," and [USA Today](#) (8/2, Estepa) notes Miller said in response, "I am shocked at that statement. ... It reveals your cosmopolitan bias to a shocking degree. ... The notion that you think this is a racist bill is so wrong and so insulting." The [Washington Times](#) (8/2, Boyer) also highlights that part of the exchange, and [The Hill](#) (8/2, Fabian) indicates Miller called Acosta's question "one of the most outrageous, insulting, ignorant and foolish things you've ever said."

The [Daily Caller](#) (8/2, Pfeiffer) noted that at one point during the exchange, Acosta "interrupted Miller and asked, 'are we just going to bring in people from Great Britain and Australia?'" Miller responded, "I have to say, I am shocked at your statement that you think that only people from Great Britain and Australia would know English. It's all — it reveals your cosmopolitan bias to a shocking degree that in your mind — no, this is an amazing moment." The NYTimes' Glenn Thrush also pushed Miller on hard data backing his assertions, to which Miller said, "Maybe we'll make a carve-out in the bill that says The New York Times can hire all the less skilled, low paid workers from other countries and see how you feel about low wage substitution."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/2, story 3, 1:30, Mason) showed Acosta asking, "Aren't you trying to change what it means to be an immigrant coming into this country if you're telling them, if you have to speak English — can't people learn how to speak English when they get here?" Miller replied, "Well, first of all, right now it's a requirement that to be naturalized you have to speak English, so the notion that speaking English wouldn't be a part of the immigration system would be actually very ahistorical."

The [New York Post](#) (8/2, Fredericks) reports Acosta told Miller, "When it comes to immigration, the Statue of Liberty says 'give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to be free.' It doesn't say anything about speaking English or learning to be a computer programmer." Miller replied, "I don't want to get off into a whole thing about history, but the Statue of Liberty is a symbol of American liberty lighting the world. The poem you are referring to was added later. It is not actually part of the original Statue of Liberty." The [AP](#) (8/2, Contreras) reports the exchange under the headline "Trump Aide Dismisses Statue of Liberty 'Huddled Masses' Poem."

Acosta later said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/2), "I think at times this the White House has an unhealthy fixation on what I call the three M's: the Muslims, the Mexicans and the media. Their policies tend to be centered around bashing one of those three groups, and we just see it time and time again. Today on immigration, what the White House is essentially saying with a wink and a dog whistle to some of these battleground states that they won, is that immigrants coming in from Latin America are taking your jobs."

Tucker Carlson said on [Fox News Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (8/2), "Jim Acosta and the network he works for don't know much at all about this subject. They don't know how many immigrants come here every year or how. They don't have any clue as to how many should come ideally. They know very little of the economic effect those immigrants have on Americans who already live here because they don't care enough to find out. They are utterly ignorant on the subject of immigration and yet — and here is the amazing part — they are still filled with absolute moral certainty and boundless self-righteousness."

Charles Krauthammer said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (8/2), "I love the hypocrisy of the liberals who are so shocked by this. People who swoon over Canada's progressivism with its national healthcare and its matinee star liberal prime minister. ... All of a sudden, when the US proposes essentially the Canadian system, a merit-based system, they are shocked at how mean and racist it is."

In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/2) says "Miller is correct that as a percentage of the country's population, foreign-born residents are near their highest level in almost a century. That stark fact is a major cause of the nativist, anti-immigration backlash that helped propel Mr. Trump's candidacy and that sustains the hard core of his political base even after a calamitous first six months in office."

"Upshot": Trump Primary Supporters More Likely To Consider European Ancestry Key To American Identity. The [New York Times](#) (8/2, Vavreck) "The Upshot" looks at "The Great Political Divide Over American Identity," writing that "the 2016 election made clear that there's not universal agreement on what it means to be an American, with restrictive views centered on ethnicity and religion playing a major role in the Trump campaign." [A survey](#) by the Democracy Fund found that while "relatively few members of both parties linked American identity with being

of European heritage (only 16 percent of Democrats and 23 percent of Republicans thought this was important)," 30 percent of President Trump's supporters said so, contrasted with 16 percent of Sen. Ted Cruz's supporters and nine percent of those who backed Gov. John Kasich. And while 63 percent of all Republicans said being born in the US was "was important for people who want to call themselves American," among Trump supporters the number was 72 percent.

Trump Signs "Seriously Flawed" Russia Sanctions Bill, Criticizing Congress As He Does So.

Coverage of President Trump's signing of Russian sanctions legislation focuses primarily on the President's highly critical signing statement, in which he called the measure "seriously flawed" and an affront to the role of the Executive Branch. Analyses say the President was essentially forced into signing the bill because near-unanimous votes in both the Senate and House would have made a veto override a near-certainty. Broadcast network coverage was limited, with only ABC running a full-length story – though all the major national newspapers have reports.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/2, story 3, 1:40, Muir) reported that the President "did sign [the sanctions bill], but without cameras, and he did not sign it without blasting lawmakers and the bill itself." ABC's Cecilia Vega: "President Trump, so often criticized for being too soft on the Kremlin, today reluctantly signed into law tough new sanctions on Russia. But for someone who seems to so enjoy a signing ceremony, the White House kept this one behind closed doors, away from the cameras. The President signing it but issuing scathing words at the same time, calling the legislation 'seriously flawed.'" [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/2, story 4, 0:25, Holt) briefly reported that the President "reluctantly" signed the measure.

The [AP](#) (8/2, Salama, Lardner) reports that Trump "grudgingly signed what he called a 'seriously flawed' package of sanctions against Russia on Wednesday, bowing for the moment to resistance from both parties to his push for warmer ties with Moscow." The AP says Trump "signed the most significant piece of legislation of his presidency with no public event" and with a "resentful" signing statement. [Reuters](#) (8/2, Rampton, Zengerle) reports that Trump "slammed the legislation as infringing on his powers to shape foreign policy, saying he could make 'far better deals' with governments than Congress."

The [New York Times](#) (8/2, Baker) reports that in his signing statement, Trump "asserted that the measure included 'clearly unconstitutional provisions' and left open the possibility that he might choose not to enforce them as lawmakers intended." [Politico](#) (8/2, Nussbaum, Schor) reports that the statement "included a stepped-up defense of his own administrations foreign policy and input on the legislation. Trump said that 'despite its problems,' he had signed the bill 'for the sake of national unity.'"

[USA Today](#) (8/2, Jackson) reports that some Democrats "saw Trump's signing statement as an 'apology' note" to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Democratic analyst Jesse Ferguson said, "It's far less significant that he signed a bill which would have become law anyway because of an override from Congress than it is that he attached a note apologizing to Putin for doing it." In a second item, [USA Today](#) (8/2, Korte) writes that the audience for such signing statements "is usually a small group of Washington players...in this case, there may be yet another audience: the world." Washington and Lee University law professor Mark Rush said, "What you see the President doing in this case is trying to maintain a powerful image in foreign affairs. ... I think this is just a bit of bluster."

Charlie Savage of the [New York Times](#) (8/2) writes, "It was politically remarkable for Mr. Trump to issue a statement challenging aspects of this particular bill, which a distrustful Congress forced upon him." But in legal terms, his "objections were unremarkable." Martin Lederman, who served in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel during the Obama Administration, said, "The particular constitutional objections in the signing statement are not groundbreaking or particularly noteworthy – they reflect the likely views of most any administration."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/2, Ballhaus, Andrews) reports that during the congressional debate over the bill, the White House would not say whether Trump would sign it. The [Washington Post](#) (8/2, Phillip) writes, "Lawmakers' solidarity in tying Trump's hands on this issue reflects a deepening concern about the administration's posture toward Russia, which critics have characterized as naive. ... Despite Trump's considerable objections," House Speaker Ryan "praised the bill becoming law" Ryan said, "Today, the United States sent a powerful message to our adversaries that they will be held accountable for their actions."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/2, Bierman) reports that Trump "quietly signed" the legislation "without cameras. ... He had little choice about signing the bill after nearly unanimous votes in both houses of Congress approved it, all but guaranteeing any veto would be overridden." Sen.



James Lankford said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (8/2), "If the President wants to be able to pull those sanctions down, he needs to come back to Congress. We all agreed to put them in place, we all need to agree together to take them out."

Several Republicans praised the President's decision online. Sen. Jeff Flake [tweeted](#), "There are times I'll agree w @realDonaldTrump & times I'll disagree. Today he should be commended for signing #RussiaSanctionsBill". Sen. John McCain [tweeted](#), "Glad @POTUS signed #RussiaSanctions- hope he'll be as vocal about Russian aggression as he was about concerns w bill". The official Senate GOP account [tweeted](#), "Sanctions on Iran, North Korea, and Russia passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress and were signed into law today."

Rep. Bill Flores (R-TX) [said on Facebook](#), "Pleased to see that President Trump has signed the bill to impose sanctions on Russia, Iran and North Korea into law. These rogue regimes must be held accountable for their aggressive behaviors." Rep. Dave Trott (R-MI) [said on Facebook](#), "Russia, Iran, & North Korea – these are some of our world's most nefarious actors. I applaud President Trump's implementation of these new sanctions, which choke off their economic lifelines and their ability to undermine our national security."

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/2, Talev), the [Washington Times](#) (8/2, Miller), and [The Hill](#) (8/2, Easley) also have reports.

Medvedev: "Incompetent" Trump Will Be "Liquidated" By US Establishment. Tom Rogan of the [Washington Examiner](#) (8/2) writes that "in a [Facebook post](#) specifically referencing Trump, the Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev (No. 2 only to Putin), warned that Congress sees Trump as 'an incompetent player' who must be 'liquidated,'" and later "continued his criticism on Twitter, saying in a [series of tweets](#) that, 'The Trump administration has shown its total weakness by handing over executive power to Congress in the most humiliating way.'" Medvedev added, "The US establishment fully outwitted Trump." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/2, Bierman) reports that Medvedev "denounced the measure as a 'full-scale trade war' and an end to 'the hope that our relations with the new American administration would improve.'"

Pence Praises Trump For Signing Bill. The [Washington Post](#) (8/2, Parker) reports that in a Wednesday interview on his flight back from Montenegro, Vice President Pence "touted President Trump's signing of a Russia sanctions bill as evidence that the White House strongly rejects Russian meddling and misbehavior around the world." Pence said, "His decision to sign the Iran sanctions bill – or the Iran-North Korea-Russia sanctions bill – I think is reflective of a desire to make sure that freedom-loving countries around the world know that we are with them, and that Russia and the rogue regimes in North Korea and Iran know that this president and this administration expect a change."

Ashley Parker of the [Washington Post](#) (8/2) reports that during his trip to Estonia, Georgia, and Montenegro, Pence "spoke forcefully about the specter of Russian aggression, talked of 'peace through strength,' and reaffirmed" the US commitment to NATO. But his "tough-on-Russia talk doesn't quite align with some of the previous comments from Trump, who remained mostly silent on the issue this week."

Politico Analysis: Congress Challenging Trump On Russia Again Over Nuclear Arms Treaty. [Politico](#) (8/2, Bender) writes, "Congress is moving to force the Pentagon to violate a nuclear arms treaty with Russia – in yet another effort to box" in Trump on relations with Russia. Language in pending defense bills "would require the military to begin developing medium-range missiles banned by a 1987." The legislation is "likely to stir up new friction between lawmakers and Trump, who has already accused Congress of illegally meddling in his dealings with Russia."

Congress Could Ban Any Federal Use Of Kaspersky Lab Products And Services. [National Journal](#) (8/2, Bordelon) reports that though Russian cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab "has already weathered a rough couple of months" after being removed as a General Services Administration-approved vendor following reports of its connection to Russian intelligence, its "troubles are just beginning. The Senate will soon consider a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act that bans the use of Kaspersky software, hardware, or services in all federal agencies," and the House may soon do the same. Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), the ranking member on the House Intelligence Committee, said, "I guess the bottom line for me is, is any of this data you'd be concerned about the Russian government having? If it is, then I wouldn't recommend the use of Kaspersky."

Some Senate Republicans Hope To Return To ACA After Tax Reform.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (8/2, King) reports that "some Senate Republicans say they are not abandoning Obamacare repeal, although any progress is likely months away." The leadership is interested in moving on to tax reform, and those senators who hope to return to work on the

Affordable Care Act say that must come first. Sen. Thom Tillis said, "We've gotta start forming up consensus around tax reform." Sen. Rand Paul similarly said, "We should continue on the tax front, but we should continue negotiating on the health front." Sen. Ted Cruz said more optimistically, "The media celebration that the vote last week came one vote short, I believe, was premature. We are close, and we could get to yes, and I believe we will."

Mulvaney Says Congress Should Not Abandon Healthcare. OMB Director Mulvaney was asked on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (8/2) about Senate Majority Leader McConnell's claim that it is time to move on from healthcare. Mulvaney said, "I understand why the leader is saying that but at the same time, I think it is important that we still deal with the issue. ... I don't know how you run saying something for seven years – that we will repeal and replace Obamacare if you give us the House, if you give us the Senate, if you give us the White House – and then when the voters give that to you, you don't follow through on that promise."

Portman: ACA "Dying On Its Own." Sen. Rob Portman said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (8/2), "I think the Affordable Care Act is kind of dying on its own. In my own state of Ohio, we've got huge increases in deductibles and co-pays." Portman added that is "not a good thing for us to pull the rug out from under those people who are depending on those plans. On the other hand, we've got to do some real reforms here and that's why I did support the effort to replace, not just repeal, but to replace the Affordable Care Act with something better."

GOP Senators: Trump Hurt Repeal Chances By Ignoring Advice To Name Senate Democrats To Cabinet. The [Daily Caller](#) (8/2, Crowe) reports that President Trump "ignored suggestions that he add to the GOP's slim majority in the Senate" by appointing Senate Democrat to his Cabinet, which "may have cost the party the one additional vote needed to pass Obamacare repeal." GOP senators reportedly suggested that Trump name Sen. Heidi Heitkamp agriculture secretary, or Sen. Joe Manchin energy secretary. North Dakota has a Republican governor, and though West Virginia has a Democratic governor, the state went heavily Republican in the presidential election.

Mexico Denies Trump Claim About Phone Call Regarding Border Security.

[CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/2) reported President Trump's "credibility and trustworthiness" are being called into question after Mexico denied Trump's claim on Monday that Mexico "called me" and praised his success in slowing unauthorized border crossings. The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/2, story 2, 2:10, Mason) showed Trump saying, "Even the president of Mexico called me. They said their southern border, very few people are coming because they know they're not going to get through our border, which is the ultimate compliment." CBS (Reid): "But the Mexican Foreign Ministry responded that President Peña Nieto 'has not recently spoken to Donald Trump over the telephone.'"

Cecilia Vega said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/2, story 4, 2:15, Muir), "Today, we asked the White House, did President Trump lie?" White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders: "No. On Mexico, he was referencing the conversation that they had had at the G20 summit." Vega: "But the President specifically said that he received a phone call from the President of Mexico..." Sanders: "They were direct conversations, not phone calls." Vega: "So he lied. He didn't receive that phone call?" Sanders: "I wouldn't say it was a lie. That's a pretty bold accusation." Vega: "How would you characterize it?" Sanders: "The conversations took place, they just simply didn't take place over a phone call, that he had them in person."

The [New York Times](#) (8/2, Davis) says the "nonexistent" Boy Scouts and Mexico calls "added to questions about Mr. Trump's credibility and that of his White House, already in doubt given shifting explanations on matters large and small."

Meadows Says Congress Will Raise Debt Ceiling.

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/2, Edgerton, Wasson) reports that Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC), who heads the House Freedom Caucus, "said Wednesday that Congress will raise the nation's debt ceiling in September as he appeared to soften his earlier demands that any increase be paired with steep spending cuts." Meadows said, "I don't believe we should play around with the full faith and credit of our country – I'm bullish on getting it done."

Meadows Seeks Corporate Tax Rate In High Teens.

[The Hill](#) (8/2, Jagoda) reports that House Freedom Caucus Chairman Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) said Wednesday that "he wants Congress to enact a corporate tax rate that's in the teens in order to go 'big and bold' on tax reform." He said, "I don't want to nibble around the edges. I think that something with a one in front of it, whether it's 15 or 17 or 18 [percent], that's where we need to be."

Blinder: GOP Likely To Pursue Tax Cuts, Not Tax Reform. Alan Blinder of the Brookings Institution, a former Federal Reserve vice chairman, writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/2) that though everyone in Washington agrees that tax reform is desperately needed, there is no consensus on how to do so. He writes that Republicans are likely to instead pursue tax cuts for the wealthy and for corporations.

Van Hollen: Democrats Interested In “Genuine Tax Reform,” Not Tax Cuts. Sen. Chris Van Hollen said on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) (8/2) that Senate Democrats “sent a letter to Mitch McConnell...saying we were happy to work with him on genuine tax reform. We’re not interested in providing another round of windfall tax breaks to very, very wealthy people. We don’t think that’s the priority in the country.”

National Journal Analysis: Trump Has Seen Most Success On Agency Regulations.

[National Journal](#) (8/2, Plautz) reports in an analysis that the Trump Administration “has enjoyed the most success” in “its largely under-the-radar effort to systematically shift administrative and regulatory decisions in the executive branch to the right.” While these “advances have been overshadowed so far by Trump’s legislative failures,” in “decisions usually announced in the small print of the Federal Register, his administration is making a sharp turn to the right in virtually every federal department and agency.” Taken together, they “amount to an organized assault on Democratic priorities and a hard tilt toward corporate and conservative preferences.”

EPA Highlights Improvements In Air Quality.

The [AP](#) (8/2, Biesecker) reports that as EPA Administrator Pruitt “moves to roll back regulations aimed at making further gains” on air quality, he is “praising significant improvements” on that front. A report from the agency released Wednesday shows that “in the 45 years between the passage of the Clean Air Act and the end of 2016, emissions of six harmful pollutants declined by a combined 73 percent,” but “nearly 40 percent of Americans live in areas that fail to meet federal air quality standards.” Pruitt says “there is more work to be done,” but the AP notes that since his appointment, Pruitt “has moved to block or delay several Obama-era regulations aimed at reducing pollutants caused by burning fossil fuels.”

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

“Capitol Shocker: Democrats And Republicans Start Working Together On Health Care.”

The [New York Times](#) (8/3, Board) editorializes, “Something unusual and important is happening in Congress: Republicans and Democrats are working together to improve the health care system. And they’re doing so in defiance of President Trump, who appears determined to sabotage the Affordable Care Act and the health insurance of millions of people.” The Times writes that Congress can either “follow Mr. Trump’s lead, and treat Americans’ health care as a hostage in a purposeless political battle, or it can stabilize the health care market.”

“Mr. Maduro’s Drive To Dictatorship.” The [New York Times](#) (8/3) says in an editorial that while Venezuela, “with possibly the world’s largest oil reserves, had the chance to be one of South America’s leading democracies,” its “overdependence on oil has led to political and economic turbulence, which became disastrous” when President Nicolás Maduro “sought to emulate his left-wing predecessor, Hugo Chávez, with lavish public spending that falling oil prices and chronic mismanagement rendered unsustainable.” The Times compares him to “Syria’s Bashar al-Assad, North Korea’s Kim Jong-un and Zimbabwe’s Robert Mugabe, whose rapacious greed for power has brought their countries to ruin.”

“Helping The Poor Get Through The Turnstiles.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (8/3, Board) says that Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. “took an important step toward a more rational policy” on law enforcement “when he declared in June that his office would as of September no longer prosecute most people for bus or subway fare-beating, partly because the criminal charge unfairly penalizes people for being poor.” The Times says the City Council should try again next year “to set aside money in the city budget to subsidize mass transit fares for the poorest New Yorkers.”

Washington Post.

“Trump’s War On Legal Immigration Would Cripple The Country.” In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/2) says White House senior adviser for policy Stephen Miller “is correct that

as a percentage of the country's population, foreign-born residents are near their highest level in almost a century. That stark fact is a major cause of the nativist, anti-immigration backlash that helped propel Mr. Trump's candidacy and that sustains the hard core of his political base even after a calamitous first six months in office."

"A Life Changing Genetics Breakthrough Deserves Celebration – And Demands Caution." The [Washington Post](#) (8/2) editorializes, "The news that researchers have carried out the first known attempt to create genetically modified human embryos is another signpost in an astounding revolution unfolding before our eyes." However, "this realm of scientific inquiry, manipulating the tiny building blocks of life, demands caution as well as enthusiasm and encouragement."

"Can Baltimore Go One Weekend Without A Murder?" The [Washington Post](#) (8/2) editorializes that Baltimore "is suffering through its bloodiest year in decades, a daily drumbeat of carnage impervious to community outrage and surge police deployments," and "is now on pace to exceed 400 killings this year." According to the Post, "so many factors have combined to produce the homicide spree that began in 2015" that "local officials often seem flummoxed in their attempts to unpack the causes." According to the Post, the police department "is understaffed, under-resourced and undertrained," and its "relations with the community it serves are strained to the breaking point." The Post adds that "the good news is that many residents, far from being resigned, are outraged," and "a broad coalition of churches and grass-roots groups, mainly in the black community, has launched an energetic campaign for a 72-hour cease-fire for this weekend."

Wall Street Journal.

"The Coming ObamaCare Bailout." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/2) says in an editorial that though the decision to make the Affordable Care Act's "cost-sharing" payments is in the hands of Congress, the Obama Administration continued the payments without authorization. The Journal says that Trump is right to consider ending the payments, but because they are illegal, not as a bargaining chip.

"Tillerson's Korea Confusion." A [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/2) editorial says that while Secretary of State Tillerson said Tuesday that the US doesn't seek regime change in North Korea, the Administration shouldn't take any options off the table. The Journal also argues that the best way for the US to secure Chinese cooperation is to work toward regime change.

"Bartman At The Bat." A [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/2, Board) editorial.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Dow Passes 22000, Fueled By Broad Global Growth](#)
[Trumps Signs—And Slams—Russia Sanctions](#)
[Struggling Americans Once Sought Greener Pastures—Now They're Stuck](#)
[In Gene-Editing Advance, Scientists Correct Defect In Human Embryos](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Supports Plan To Cut Legal Immigration By Half](#)
[In Breakthrough, Scientists Edit A Dangerous Mutation From Genes In Human Embryos](#)
[Trump Keeps His Conservative Movement Allies Closest](#)
[Affirmative Action Battle Has A New Focus: Asian-Americans](#)
[Wall Street, Climbing Sharply, Skips Washington's 'Soap Opera'](#)
[Under Trump, A Hollowed-Out Force In Syria Quickly Lost CIA Backing](#)
[Prince Philip Makes His Last Solo Appearance, After 65 Years In The Public Eye](#)
[Amazon's Jobs Fair Sends Clear Message: Now Hiring Thousands](#)

Washington Post:

[Plan Set To Slash Green Cards](#)
[Gene Fix In Human Embryos Is A First](#)
[Dow's Bulls On Parade Hurdle 22,000](#)
[Trump Reluctantly Signs Russia Sanctions Bill](#)
[Editor Brought Julia Child To The Table](#)

Financial Times:

[Neymar Free To Chase 222m Record Transfer](#)
[Trump Signs Russia Sanctions Law But Blasts Curbs On White House](#)
[Hungry Investors Pile Into First Iraq Bond Sale In More Than A Decade](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Endorses Merit-Based System That Would Cut Legal Immigration By Half](#)
[White House Not A 'Dump' For Trump, But Others See Signs Of Age](#)
[American Imams Apologize After Videos Verify Jihadi Rhetoric Against Jews](#)
[Trump Eager To Declare Iran Noncompliant On Nuclear Deal: Tillerson Argues For Leverage](#)
[Full Troop Withdrawal Off The Table As Trump, Aides Debate Options For Afghanistan](#)
[Trump Signs Sanctions Against Russia, Iran, North Korea, But Slams Constraints On Executive Powers](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Minneapolis-School Explosion; Trump-Legal Immigration Bill; Trump-Russia Sanctions Bill; Trump-Recent Comments Controversy; Pennsylvania-Train Derailment; North Korea-US Missile Test; Afghanistan-Two US Service Members Killed; Ford Police Cars-Carbon Monoxide; Weather Forecast; US Economy-Amazon Jobs; North Carolina-YMCA Chemical Leak.

CBS: Russia Investigation-Phone, Email Records; Trump-Recent Comments Controversy; Trump-Legal Immigration Bill; Justice Department-Affirmative Action; Afghanistan-Two US Service Members Killed; Baltimore-Police Body Cam Investigation; Minneapolis-School Explosion; Pennsylvania-Train Derailment; Venezuela-Economic Crisis; Wall Street; Health-CRISPR Breakthrough; North Carolina-YMCA Chemical Leak; Ford Police Cars-Carbon Monoxide; US Economy-Amazon Jobs.

NBC: US Economy-Amazon Jobs; Minneapolis-School Explosion; Trump-Legal Immigration Bill; Trump-Russia Sanctions Bill; North Korea-US Missile Test; Trump-Afghanistan Strategy; Innocence Project-Exonerated Attorney; Ford Police Cars-Carbon Monoxide; Severe Weather-Heat.

Network TV At A Glance:

US Economy-Amazon Jobs – 6 minutes, 15 seconds
Trump-Legal Immigration Bill – 5 minutes, 50 seconds
Minneapolis-School Explosion – 4 minutes, 35 seconds
Trump-Recent Comments Controversy – 4 minutes, 25 seconds
Ford Police Cars-Carbon Monoxide – 3 minutes, 40 seconds
Trump-Russian Sanctions Bill – 2 minutes, 5 seconds
Pennsylvania-Train Derailment – 1 minute, 30 seconds
North Carolina-YMCA Chemical Leak – 1 minute, 20 seconds
North Korea-US Missile Test – 50 seconds
Afghanistan-Two US Service Members Killed – 30 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Oklahoma-Earthquake; Minneapolis-School Explosion; Trump-Russia Sanctions Bill; Maduro-Vote Tampering Claims.

CBS: Trump-Legal Immigration Bill; Justice Department-Affirmative Action; Minneapolis-School Explosion; Severe Weather-Heat.

FOX: Trump-Legal Immigration Bill; Trump-Russia Sanctions Bill; Afghanistan-Two US Service Members Killed; Minneapolis-School Explosion; Pennsylvania-Train Derailment; Congress-Military Force Authorization; US Economy-Amazon Jobs; Wall Street.

NPR: Trump-Russia Sanctions Bill; Justice Department-Affirmative Action; Minneapolis-School Explosion; Afghanistan-Two US Service Members Killed; Yemen-Malnutrition, Cholera Epidemic; Mississippi Nissan Plant-Union Vote; Wall Street.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Receives daily intelligence briefing; meets with National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster; participates in a Department of Veterans Affairs Telehealth Event; departs Washington, DC en route to Huntington, West Virginia; participates in a Make America

Great Again Rally; departs Huntington, West Virginia en route to Washington, DC.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Departs Washington, DC en route to Nashville, Tennessee; delivers remarks to the Tennessee GOP 2017 Statesmen's Dinner; departs Nashville, Tennessee en route to Washington, DC.

US Senate: 10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Gilbert Kaplan to be Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade; and Matthew Bassett to be Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services. Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>. Contacts: Senate Committee on Finance communications 1 202 224 4515.

10:00 AM Senate Natural Resources Committee hearing on wildland fires – Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing to examine federal and nonfederal collaboration, including through the use of technology, to reduce wildland fire risk to communities and enhance firefighting safety and effectiveness, with testimony from US Forest Service Deputy Chief of State and Private Forestry Victoria Christiansen; Department of the Interior Office of Wildland Fire Director Bryan Rice; Alaska State Forester Chris Maisch (on behalf of National Association of State Foresters); Wenatchee, WA, Economic Development Director Steve King; and Michigan Tech Research Institute Research Engineer Dr Mary Ellen Miller. Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC <http://energy.senate.gov/public/>. Contacts: Senate Energy Committee 1 202 224 4971.

10:00 AM Senate Commerce subcommittee hearing on insurance fraud – Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security Subcommittee hearing on 'Insurance Fraud in America: Current Issues Facing Industry and Consumers', with testimony from Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner John Doak (on behalf of National Association of Insurance Commissioners); Coalition Against Insurance Fraud Executive Director Dennis Jay; Insurance Information Institute CEO Sean Kevelighan; National Insurance Crime Bureau Director of Government Affairs Tim Lynch; and Consumer Federation of America General Counsel Rachel Weintraub. Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 253, Washington, DC <http://commerce.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/SenateCommerce>. Contacts: Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation press 1 202 224 4546.

10:00 AM Senate Judiciary Committee Executive Business Meeting – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including nominations of Jeffrey Bossert Clark to be Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Natural Resources Division, Peter Deegan, Jr. to be US Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa, D. Michael Dunavant to be US Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee, Louis Franklin, Sr. to be US Attorney for the Middle District of Alabama, Marc Krickbaum to be US Attorney for the Southern District of Iowa, Jessie Liu to be US Attorney for the District of Columbia, and Richard Moore to be US Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama, plus 'S. 705, Child Protection Improvements Act of 2017'. Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 226, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>. Contacts: Senate Judiciary Committee press 1 202 224 7703.

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including 'S.XXXX, Taylor Force Act', and consideration of nominations of Michael Arthur Raynor to be US Ambassador to Ethiopia; Maria Brewer to be US Ambassador to Sierra Leone; and John Desrocher to be US Ambassador to Algeria. Location: US Capitol, S-116, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>. Contacts: Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 1 202 224 4651.

US House: Not in session.

Other: No relevant events.

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "The Pew Research Center yesterday...released a report of the world's most dangerous threats. ... In the United States, we said cyberattacks are the most dangerous threat. Here in LA, we said traffic and gluten, but the rest of the country said cyberattacks."

Jimmy Kimmel: "The President's approval rating has dropped to a new low. This is a newer new low than the last new low. Trump's approval rating is down to 33 percent today, which I think is lower than the 'Emoji Movie.'"

Jimmy Kimmel: "According to Golf magazine, of all places, the President told a group of members

at his golf club in New Jersey, 'The White House is a real dump.' A White House spokesperson today denied the President said that, so it's true."

Jimmy Kimmel: [Referencing Trump's golf vacation] "You know it's going to be one of those 'Home Alone'-type scenarios when he forgets to take Barron with him. They leave him and he accidentally launches a nuke at North Korea or Canada or something."

Jimmy Kimmel: "Before heading out of town, President Trump today signed a round of sanctions against Russia to punish Russia for making him win the election. He's still very angry about that."

Jimmy Kimmel: "The sanctions...passed with an overwhelming majority in the House and the Senate, so Trump had to sign it. Vladimir Putin is not happy. In fact, he changed their relationship status on Facebook today to 'it's complicated.'"

Jimmy Kimmel: "The prime minister of Russia is calling this, now, 'full-scale trade war' with the United States, which, what do we even trade with them? I mean, does this mean we won't be able to get nesting eggs? I don't know."

Jimmy Kimmel: "Did you know Sean Spicer is still working at the White House? He resigned like two weeks ago, but he's still there and they're planning to have him stay on as de facto communications director, despite the fact that he quit. Sean Spicer's like the boyfriend who breaks up with you but still comes over to mow your lawn."

Trevor Noah: [Referencing Trump's support for new immigration bill] "Somewhere right now Hillary Clinton is like, 'Oh, you think people should advance based on merit now? Interesting.'"

Jimmy Fallon: "This morning, President Trump announced a new immigration plan that will favor people who speak English, which is why tonight he had to deport himself."

Jimmy Fallon: "He also signed off on new sanctions against Russia for interfering with our election. Source says that he talked to Vladimir Putin on the phone right before. Yeah. People said that was inappropriate. Trump said, 'I agree, I wanted to Facetime.'"

Seth Meyers: "A new Quinnipiac Poll found that 33 percent of people approve of the job President Trump is doing. Unfortunately, they're all under investigation."

Seth Meyers: "According to Axios, President Trump has been trying to impress his new White House chief of staff, John Kelly, by acting sharper in meetings and rattling off stats. So far, none have been right, but bless him, he's trying."

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